



Ballpark Beakon

ISSUE 1 • SUMMER 2001



New Era of Mud Hens Baseball

The Toledo Mud Hens will have a new home at the Lucas County Ballpark in the Warehouse District of downtown Toledo. The Mud Hens will open play in April 2002 in a 10,000-seat, state-of-the-art facility that incorporates popular features of major-league ballparks new and old. Bordered by Monroe, Washington, Huron, and St. Clair streets, the ballpark will replace Ned Skeldon Stadium, the Hens home since 1965.

The "Roost" and the Field

The right field corner and 'The Roost' at the new Mud Hens Ballpark were designed to be reminiscent of Wrigley Field, Camden Yards and Tiger Stadium. At both Wrigley and Camden, historic buildings are just across the street from the ballpark. In the new Mud Hens Ballpark, six historic buildings will be incorporated into the right field concourse. Furthermore, the first two rows of "The Roost" will actually overhang the playing field, reminiscent of the home run porch at old Tiger Stadium. St. Clair Street will be just beyond the right field wall and long home runs can be retrieved



by fans just like Waveland Avenue at Wrigley Field. The natural grass playing field will be approximately 14 feet below street level with an asymmetrical home run fence - lots of nooks and crannies that will provide the Hens with a home field advantage. The home run fence distances will be 320 to left field with a 15-foot high wall designed to remind fans of Fenway Park. The left field power alley will be 386 feet. The unique centerfield alcove, reminiscent of the Polo Grounds in New York, will be 406, 400, and 412 to dead center. The right field home run fence will conform to the buildings on St. Clair Street resulting in distances of 375, 342, 341 and 320 feet.

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Welcome

We want to thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to read the first edition of the *Ballpark Beakon*. This newsletter is an effort to keep you informed of the progress involved with the new Lucas County Ballpark.

We are certainly excited about the whole project-and we're simply overwhelmed at the progress being made. We anticipated a buzz of excitement from the general public as the steel skeleton took shape in the downtown Toledo skyline. But the enthusiasm the public has demonstrated and the positive comments we have received have exceeded our wildest expectations!

We want to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in the design and construction of the Lucas County Ballpark. You have all faced tight deadlines, met the challenges involved in a unique structure, and battled bad weather to keep the ballpark project on track, on time, and on budget.

The support of the Founders Club, Mud Hens season ticketholders, corporate and community sponsors, and the public as a whole has been heartwarming and appreciated.

Without all of you, the new Lucas County Ballpark would not be possible.

What you will read and see in this newsletter is just the beginning. We look forward to more public

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A Career Solid as Concrete

Lee Schober can best be described as a construction veteran. The 60-year old construction superintendent for Rudolph-Libbe has spent 42 years on sites all over Northwest Ohio.

Lee lives for the challenge of a construction project, and he admits the new Lucas County Ballpark is providing all he can handle.

"They used to say nothing's impossible, it just takes time. Now this seems like we're doing the impossible in less time," Lee says. "It's coming together fairly quickly. It's been a tight schedule, but we've made it work. It's challenging, but that's the part I enjoy."

Lee supervises 30-40 workers at a time on the ballpark site. He's responsible for all the concrete being poured at the site—all 8,100 cubic yards of it. That may be a big reason his crews have nicknamed him "The Main Man."

Lee has worked on some big projects in his long and storied career. His biggest project by far has been the North Star Steel plant in Delta.

Lee also helped in the renovation of the University of Toledo's Glass Bowl ten years ago. Lee lists the ballpark project as one of the most unique.

"This is a different configuration than a typical stadium, and I've done just about everything, every kind of structure there is," Lee says. "It's an interesting project—a lot of different types of concrete work."

Lee also realizes he's part of a lasting legacy of sorts that his five children and eight grandchildren will get to enjoy.

"Oh, I'm sure it will be a downtown landmark," Lee says with pride. "It will be a nice-looking place when it's all done."

One of Lee's hobbies is taking extensive photographs of the projects he's been associated with over the years.

"When I can't do this anymore, I'll have something to look back at what I used to do," Lee points out.

Lee will wait a while before he flips through his growing collection of ballpark photos.

"It's all in my head," Lee says. "I know what it looked like when we started."

But Lee admits he has shaped a mental picture of what the finished ballpark will look like. Did he get it right? "There's a structure taking shape now," Lee says. "It's what I expected."

Lee admits his latest job is a far cry from his first one four decades ago—turning an old chicken coop into a storage building at what is now the Brush Wellman plant in Elmore. Now he's responsible for laying the foundation of the Toledo Mud Hens new coop. But Lee considers each project a feather in the construction hat of a long, worthwhile career.

We invite you to take an on-line ballpark tour featuring our special month-by-month progress photos and view a ballpark fact sheet at our website, www.co.lucas.oh.us.



Did you know?

The Lucas County Ballpark includes:

- ★ 1,100 tons of steel
- ★ 8,100 cubic yards of concrete
- ★ 90,000 cubic yards of excavated dirt
- ★ 200 construction workers at peak
- ★ 13 construction companies
- ★ 9 local construction companies
- ★ 94,000 square feet of grass
- ★ 150,000 square feet of ballpark building
- ★ 8-acre ballpark site
- ★ Playing field 14 feet below ground level
- ★ Largest crane-250 feet high

Rookie Has Big Dreams

The excitement surrounding construction of the new Lucas County Ballpark is not only building among people in the Toledo area, but among the construction workers themselves.

The new Lucas County Ballpark is the first construction job of Stephanie Frye's budding career as an apprentice pipefitter for Warner Mechanical.

"There probably won't be another Mud Hens ballpark built in my lifetime," Stephanie admits. "So this may be a once-in-a-lifetime job."

The 23-year old Maumee native is definitely excited about her first assignment.

Her eyes get big and bright when asked about what it's like to work on the future home of the world-famous Toledo Mud Hens. "I didn't know what to expect at first, but I love it," Stephanie says. "It's like an obstacle course and scavenger hunt. You're going up and down, back and forth, running around. You never do something twice, always something different. It's a fun job!"

Stephanie's enthusiasm extends to the ballpark project, too. "I think it will bring a lot more activity to downtown Toledo—it's a great idea," says Stephanie. "When the project first started and the site was picked, people started buying all the old buildings and put in restaurants and living quarters. It'll just bring more people to downtown Toledo."

Stephanie attended Mud Hens games at Ned Skeldon Stadium as a kid, because her family lived just a few blocks away. Her dad and brothers went to the ball games on a regular basis. "I always made them take me, too," Stephanie says.

Stephanie wants to take her favorite niece to the Mud Hens home opener next spring, but has already ensured her niece has a permanent piece of the new ballpark. "I bought one of the bricks for my niece as a birthday present," Stephanie says with pride. "I'm getting my name on one of the bricks, too."

She also plans to bring her own kids to the new ballpark someday. "When I bring my kids to the ballpark, I can show them what I did," she says. But Stephanie is quick to point out children will come after she works hard to attain master pipefitter status and a business degree. In fact, Stephanie comes from a family of pipefitters. Her mom is the only female master pipefitter in Ohio.

"I'd like my mom and me to be the first-ever mother-daughter pipefitter team," Stephanie says.

Stephanie has some big dreams for her career in construction. She certainly has the energy to pull it off. But Stephanie says working on the new ballpark is already a dream-come-true for the next several months.

Ballpark Art

Public art will add to the beauty of the new Lucas County Ballpark and the streetscape projects surrounding it.

The Arts Commission of Greater Toledo has partnered with the Toledo Mud Hens, Board of Lucas County Commissioners and others to form a Design Review Board to select public art that will be featured in and around the ballpark. The aim of the art is to improve the overall experience at the ballpark and to improve the quality of life in downtown Toledo.

The Ballpark Design Review Board issued a Call for Artists in February of this year, sending out informational packets to interested local, national, and international artists. More than forty proposals were received from as far away as Amsterdam, Netherlands and Lima, Peru, to as close as our own community.

The Ballpark Design Review Board has selected five finalists to present proposals in late July. Ideas from the finalists range from baseball-themed entry gates to a group of bronze children looking into the ballpark through knotholes in a fence.

The Ballpark Design Review Board's efforts are being funded by a grant from the Lucas County Board of Commissioners and the City of Toledo's 1% for the Arts Fund.

The Toledo Mud Hens and the Arts Commission of Greater Toledo are working together to put on an opening celebration at the new ballpark. Most of the proceeds from that event will fund the commissioning of that public art.

Club Level Seating - the Best Vista in Baseball

The ballpark will include 28 private suites, two party suites available to rent, and 1,000 club level seats, which will span from first base to third base. Designed to capture the spirit of and excellent views afforded by the cantilevered balcony at historic Tiger Stadium, nearly 80% of our Club Seats have already been sold, Club Level seats have sold out in Louisville, Dayton and Sacramento, the only other minor league parks to have Club Seats. This section will offer a private entrance, concourse, lounge and terrace similar to Major League Ballparks. Special club level concessions will offer high quality food and beverage before, during, and after the game.

Close Proximity to the Field - Bring Your Glove!

The first row of infield seats will be as close as 40 feet to first and third base and just eight inches above the playing field. Fans seated in the first row behind home plate will be closer to the batter than the pitcher! The right and left field outfield seats will be as close as 12 feet from the foul lines. The outfield picnic terraces will be adjacent to the home run fence in right-center and left-center fields. The bullpens will be located in foul territory just beyond the dugouts similar to Wrigley Field in Chicago.

Where's the Party? And Other Amenities

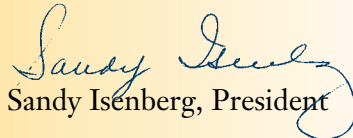
The Ballpark will boast six unique party areas for you to choose from - "The Roost" and the adjacent banquet room (25 to 282 people), two large Luxury Party Suites (15 to 50 guests), Two "Homerun" Party Terraces (25 to 600 people), and two Suite Level Party Decks (25 - 375 people). The main concourse will be home to ample concessions that will offer a wide variety of food and beverage choices, the largest souvenir store in minor league baseball (3,500 square feet, expandable to two floors) and a children's play area. Furthermore, the main concourse will encircle the entire ballpark, permitting fans to enjoy every feature of the Hens new home. Other features of the ballpark will be a large video board in left field as part of the scoreboard, wheelchair accessibility throughout the ballpark, and a brick-paving program around the park...a chance for fans and companies to make their permanent contribution to the project.

announcements and fun events in the near future. The Roost will soon be constructed, naming rights will be announced soon, and you'll see seating and the playing field be installed this fall.

We are waiting with great anticipation for next spring, when we can throw out the first pitch and say "Play Ball!"

Sincerely,

The Board of Lucas County
Commissioners


Sandy Isenberg, President


Bill Copeland, Commissioner


Harry Barlos, Commissioner

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